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DEPARTMENT FOR G AND DRL/SEA
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SUBJECT: ITALY: RESPONSE ON HUMAN RIGHTS ROUNDTABLE AT 2007
UNGA

REF: SECSTATE 125456

¶1. This cable responds to reftel request for information on post's activities to promote democracy and human rights and the Italian government's democracy and human rights priorities.

¶2. In promoting human rights, Mission Italy has focused on integration of immigrants, particularly Muslims, and trafficking in persons, themes on which the Ambassador and senior embassy officers regularly engage the Italian government.

¶3. Over the last year Mission Italy has organized two major conferences and a series of U.S. speaker, IV and VOLVIS programs to address the challenges of integrating Muslims and other immigrants, the need for inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, and the relevance of the American immigrant experience for European immigration policies.

¶4. In addition, as part of an on-going dialogue with Italian policy makers, opinion leaders, government officials and NGO representatives on combating trafficking in persons, Mission Italy and Embassy Vatican have organized several DVCs and VOLVIS programs, including a DVC with TIP Director John R. Miller on "Supply and Demand: Behind The Business of Trafficking in Persons" for fifty GOI and Vatican officials, NGO and representatives and journalists.

¶5. The center-left Italian government has increased efforts to fight trafficking in persons and assist victims, and expanded the scope of operations of the Ministry for Equal Opportunity to include human rights at large. Italy is a member of the UN Human Rights Council.

¶6. The GOI's 2007 budget set aside funds to establish an observer on violence against women. In 2003 the government created the National Office Against Racial Discrimination, which assists victims in cooperation with NGOs.

¶7. One of Italy's most significant human rights priorities is its campaign against the death penalty. Italy supports a moratorium on capital punishment, and ultimately the world-wide abolition of the death penalty.

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